

## Measuring EFL Learners Cultural Knowledge and Intercultural Sensitivity.

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### Abstract

The tendency towards globalization has affected every aspect of our life and has raised the value of being competent in interacting and communicating effectively with other individuals who are from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Accordingly, cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity have become a strong demand in order to live peacefully and meaningfully in nowadays' diverse world. Therefore, the current study attempted to investigate EFL learners' cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity. To reach this objective, Kenji Kitao's test of American cultural knowledge and Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale have been used. The subjects were 68 second year learners who were studying at the English department at the University of Jijel. The findings reveal that the learners' cultural knowledge about the target language culture was average; however, their intercultural sensitivity was poor.

**Keywords:** Cultural knowledge; Intercultural Sensitivity; Culture; Target Language Culture; Teaching culture

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The tendency towards globalization has affected every aspect of our life and has raised the value of being competent in interacting and communicating effectively with other individuals who are from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Consequently, cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity have become a strong demand in order to live peacefully and meaningfully in nowadays' diverse world.

Teaching culture to foreign language learners has increasingly become a significant issue in the context of language teaching and learning. In fact, there has been an increasing interest toward the close connection between language and culture as learning a language also involves learning the associated culture. The exposure to foreign culture and totally new and different customs, behaviors, ways of thinking that are not similar to the learners' own provides them with opportunities to develop their worldview and change their attitudes positively. This, in turn, helps them to communicate successfully and effectively with other foreigners across cultures. Intercultural sensitivity helps the learners to tolerate differences and respect others' beliefs and attitudes. It allows them to become open minded and understanding as they start thinking and see the world from the shoe of the others. For this reason, increasing learners' cultural knowledge, sensitivity and their ability to efficiently and appropriately communicate with others who belong to another culture in different contexts is one of the main aims of the foreign language instructions. To achieve this aim, learners are required first to acquire knowledge about the target language culture and then they are

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required to reflect on their own culture in relation to other cultures (McKay, 2002, p.83 as cited in Lázár, 2003, p.40<sup>i</sup>)

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Definition of Culture**

Culture is a vague and ambiguous concept. Due to its complexity, this concept has been defined in many ways by various scholars in different fields. Apte<sup>ii</sup>(1994) argued that ‘despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature’ (p.2001).

Scholars from the field of language learning and teaching are interested in the concept of culture and they have made efforts to define it from their angle too. Kramsch<sup>iii</sup>(2013, p.58), for example, states that despite the extensive amount of research devoted to define the nature of culture in foreign language study, culture remains a debated issue in the teaching of foreign languages around the world involving school curricula, language teachers and language learners.

Chastain<sup>iv</sup>(1988, p.302), defines culture as “the way people live”. Similarly, Brown<sup>v</sup>(2000, p.176), writes that culture is “a way of life”. In addition, he mentions that it also consists of the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that distinguish a particular group of people in a given period of time.

Adaskou<sup>vi</sup>et al. (1990, p.03), distinguished four separate meanings of culture for language teaching purposes. These are the aesthetic sense, the sociological sense, the semantic sense and the pragmatic sense. The aesthetic sense refers to culture with capital "C" and includes cinema, music, fine arts and mainly literature. However, the sociological sense of culture refers to culture with small "c" and means the way of life of a particular social group and it comprises the organization and nature of family, interpersonal relations, work and leisure activities, customs and institutions. The semantic sense refers to food, clothing style, and institutions. Lastly, the pragmatic sense of culture refers to the social skills, background knowledge, and paralinguistic skills that help the learners to communicate successfully with the target language community members (ibid. p.03).

In addition, a distinction has been made between big “C” culture or high culture and small “c” culture or low culture. According to Lee<sup>vii</sup> (2009, p.78), Big C culture is “the culture which represents a set of facts and statistics relating to the arts, history, geography, business, education, festivals and customs of a target speech society.” Peterson<sup>viii</sup>(2004), states that Big “C” culture includes themes like geography, architecture, classical music, literature, political issues, society's norms, legal foundation, core values, history, and cognitive processes. In contrast, small "c" culture is “the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture” (Lee, 2009, p.78). Peterson (2004) defines little “c” culture as the culture focusing on common or minor themes. It includes themes such as opinions, viewpoints, preferences or tastes, gestures, body posture, use of space, clothing styles, food, hobbies, popular music, and popular issues, and certain knowledge like, trivia, facts, etc.

All in all, coming up with a single and concise definition of culture is not a simple task to do and in several cases it comes out to be a roughly unattainable one. For the purposes of this study, culture is defined as the shared products,

practices and perspectives of a particular group. This definition is based on Moran's definition of culture and it is chosen to be the guiding definition for this study as it seems to cover the major components of culture. According to the National Standards (1996), culture is defined as the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products of a society. This definition is also known as the "3 Ps" and can be presented through the figure of a triangle where "Perspectives" are placed at the top of it whereas the "Products" and "Practices" are placed on the bottom.

## **2.2. Language and Culture Relationship**

Many linguists and researchers performed groundbreaking research on language and culture and have highlighted the relationship between the two. In fact, there has been an increasing interest toward the close connection between language and culture.

Some social science scholars believe that culture would not be possible without language. Language contemporaneously reflects culture, and is affected and shaped by it, as Brown <sup>ix</sup>(2007) states, "Language is a part of a culture and culture is a part of the language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture" (pp. 189-190). He also considers language as a mirror of culture because of the fact that people can see culture through its language.

For Wei <sup>x</sup>(2005, p.56), language has a dual character: both as a means of communication and a carrier of culture. Language without culture is unthinkable, so is human culture without language.

One of the most influential and well-known hypotheses regarding the relationship between language and culture is the Whorfian hypothesis, or the Sapir /Whorf hypothesis that has been developed by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf who recognized the close connection between language and culture, concluding that it was not possible to understand or appreciate one without knowledge of the other" (taken from Wardhaugh<sup>xi</sup>, 2002, p. 220).

This means that the language an individual uses determines the way in which he/she perceives the world. Along with this, there is another aspect of this theory, which states that language merely influences thoughts. In other words, language influences the way people think and view the world, but does not completely determine it.

Anthropological linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf states that language expresses ones thoughts and perceptions. Not only this, but it also influences them. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis language shapes the view of reality of its speakers. (Whorf<sup>xii</sup>, 1956) They provided the example of the Eskimos and Norwegians who have many different words for snow, describing it in ways that would probably be meaningless to us. People who live in a tropical rain forest on the other hand would not have one single word for snow as they never see it and would not know what it was if they were to come across snow.

## **2.3. Culture in EFL Classroom**

Culture teaching is regarded as an imperative part of current foreign language learning and teaching as one key aim of language teaching is to boost the understanding and tolerance between cultures (Corbett<sup>xiii</sup>, 2003).

Language and culture are two connected items. Thereby, language learning is also considered as cultural learning. Having a good cultural competence, along with linguistic competence, will help the learners to communicate effectively through a language.

There are many central reasons to incorporate culture in EFL learning. The first reason is that culture and language are intertwined. As Brown <sup>xiv</sup>(1994) highlights “... a language is a part of culture and a culture is a part of a language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (p. 164).

Kramsch <sup>xv</sup>(2013) also maintains that culture cannot be simply overlooked in the language classroom. He observes that “culture is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least” (Kramsch, 2013, p. 1). For him, real communicative competence implies teaching culture, and that lack of cultural competence reveals the limitations of learners' communicative competence.

Moreover, Peck <sup>xvi</sup>(1998) claims that language learners cannot study language without studying the cultural background. She points out that foreign language teaching is neither accurate nor complete without the study of culture. In addition, she mentions that language learning for foreign language learners sounds meaningless if they do not have knowledge about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken. On the other hand, culture learning in EFL classes brings up two essential issues that should be addressed by the instructors and curriculum designers (Kailola<sup>xvii</sup>, 2016, p.1). The first critical issue is related to whose culture; i.e., source culture, target culture or international culture; that should be highlighted and stressed in the foreign language classroom. If the learners focus on a specific culture in language teachings, their cultural knowledge will be limited. Consequently, the learners' intercultural skills will not be well developed (ibid. p.1). As Bilash (2011) claims, in order to enhance culture learning, learners are required to gain cultural knowledge of many countries where the target language is spoken as well as their own culture (as cited in Kailola, 2016, p.1). Together with knowledge of the culture, learners need to acquire knowledge and understanding of societal and cultural norms, values and interactions associated with the culture(s) of the target language (ibid. p.1). The second important matter is related to the category of culture, which is what cultural category (Big “C” Culture / Small “c” culture) that should be addressed to the EFL learners (ibid. p.1). According to Lee (2009), small “c” culture learning is much more essential to the understanding of certain aspects of thinking, behaving and using English than the Big “C” category (p.93).

#### **2.4. Goals of Target Culture Instruction**

It is necessary for the foreign language educationalists to agree on some general, fundamental goals and objectives for all foreign language learners in the sphere of culture and to come to a decision regarding what foreign language instructors can and should be responsible for. The following are some culture goals found in the literature.

Lafayette <sup>xviii</sup>(1976) paid attention on what he considered to be realistic and testable culture goals in a foreign language curriculum and , for the sake of

simplicity and reality, he suggested that there were possibly just three culturally based goals which could be assessed in most of today's foreign language courses which are:

- **Knowledge:** the ability to recognize cultural information or patterns. The goal spotlights factual information about chosen patterns of the target culture, the learners' ability to recall, recognize, and describe cultural information.
- **Understanding:** the ability to describe and explain cultural information or pattern(s). The learner is required to understand a cultural pattern in terms of its meaning, origin, and interrelationships within the larger cultural context. This goal presupposes not only factual knowledge, but also implies reasoning ability. Learners should see the "logic" of a pattern in its own cultural context.
- **Behaviour:** the ability to use cultural information or pattern(s). This objective refers to behavioural skills such as the ability to act meaningfully, unobtrusively, and inoffensively in real or simulated cultural situations (pp.122-123).

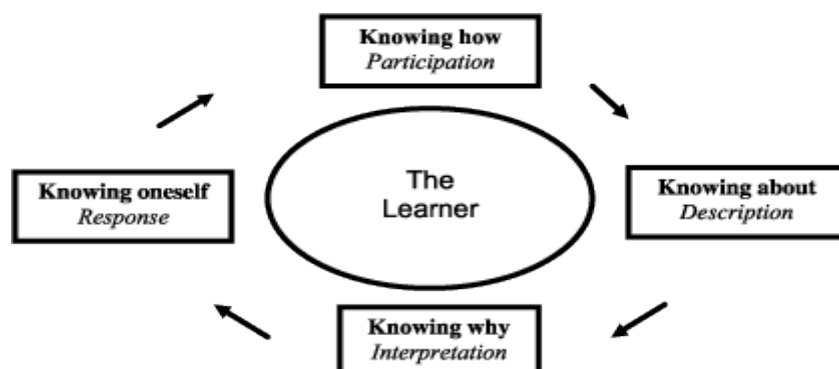
Tomalin and Stempleski<sup>xix</sup>(1993, pp.7-8) have promoted the following seven main goals of cultural instruction which have been adapted from Seelye (1988) :

- To develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviors;
- To develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the way in which people speak and behave;
- To become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture;
- To increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language;
- To develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence;
- To develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture;
- To simulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people.

## **2.5. Moran's Model of Cultural Knowing**

The cultural knowing's modal is a framework proposed by Patrick Moran<sup>xx</sup>(2001) in his book, *Teaching Culture* (p. 15), as a means to teach and learn culture so as to facilitate the development of the learners' cultural competence. It highlights human interaction, and provides a way for "describing culture in terms of what students need to do in order to learn it" (p. 15) There are four interrelated learning interactions included in the cultural experience according to this model, namely, Knowing About, Knowing How, Knowing Why, and Knowing Oneself.





**FIGURE:** David Kolb ‘s Experiential Learning Cycle (Moran, 2001)

To start with, the first interaction in this model, knowing about, consists of all the activities that include gathering and manifesting the attainment of cultural information such as facts, data and knowledge about the products, practices and perspectives of a particular culture. The second interaction, knowing how, denotes the skill of behaving appropriately with the native speakers of a specific culture, through acquiring cultural practices, and being able to accommodate and integrate themselves into the foreign culture. The third interaction, knowing why, involves increasing an understanding of essential cultural perspectives such as perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and values that govern all facets of a culture. Through this process, the learners analyze the cultural phenomena and compare it with their own culture. Finally, the last interaction, knowing oneself, has to do with self-awareness. It refers to the ability to understand how one’s own culture influences their values, opinions, beliefs, and reactions towards a foreign culture. Understanding oneself facilitates the process of comprehending, adapting, and integrating into the target culture. The following table summarizes the content, activities and outcomes of Moran's Cultural Knowings framework.

	Content	Activities	Outcomes
<b>Knowing About</b>	Cultural information	Gathering information	Cultural knowledge
<b>Knowing How</b>	Cultural practices	Developing skills	Cultural behaviors
<b>Knowing Why</b>	Cultural perspectives	Discovering expectations	Cultural understanding
<b>Knowing Oneself</b>	Self	Reflection	Self-awareness

**TABLE:** Cultural Knowings: Content, Activities, Outcomes (Moran, 1991, p. 18)

## 2.6. Intercultural Sensitivity

Scholars from different disciplines have stressed the significance of intercultural sensitivity. Most of them have concluded that intercultural sensitivity is essential in order to achieve an effective communication between people who belong to different cultural backgrounds (Chen & Starosta, 1997).

Chen (2005) pointed out that globalization united people from different cultural backgrounds together. Hence, being sensitive to cultural differences becomes a vital ability to reduce ethnocentrism and narrow-mindedness and for being competent in intercultural communications.

Intercultural sensitivity is defined as “an individual’s ability to develop emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication” (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 5). It is considered as the affective aspect of intercultural communication competence, which includes three aspects: cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects (Chen, 2009)

Dr. Milton Bennett and Mitch Hammer (1986) developed the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity to give explanation about the individuals’ reactions to cultural differences. Dr. Bennett observed that people, in both academic and corporate contexts, confronted cultural difference in predictable manner (Schmidt, 2009). The underlying assumption of his framework is that the more an individual experiences of cultural differences becomes complex and sophisticated, the more that individual's intercultural competence increases. (Schmidt<sup>xxi</sup>, 2009).

Drawing on concepts from cognitive psychology and constructivism, Bennett structured these observations into six stages of rising sensitivity to cultural difference in which each stage signal a specific cognitive structure that is expressed in particular types of attitudes and behavior related to cultural difference. By recognizing the underlying cognitive orientation toward culture difference, you can make predictions about people’s behavior and training can be tailored to facilitate development into the next stage (Schmidt, 2009).

The first three phases of this model are "ethnocentric", that is to say individual's own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way (Boyacigiller <sup>xxii</sup>et al., 2004).

Denial of cultural difference is the most basic stage of ethnocentrism. It is the state in which a person's own culture is assumed to be the only real one and there are no real dissimilarities among people from other cultures. . Other cultures are avoided by maintaining psychological and/or physical isolation from differences. People at this stage are commonly disinterested in cultural difference, although they may act aggressively to get rid of a difference if it impinges on them. (Boyacigiller et al., 2004) “Although you might be a witness to a tremendous number of foreign cultural experiences, you generally fail to make something out of them. That is, there is no successive construing and re-construing of unfamiliar events: they are simply not being registered.” (Schmidt, 2009).

The following stage is Defense which is the state in which a person's own culture is viewed as the only good one. In this phase, people are conscious of cultural differences and do not deny or ignore them, however, they view and organize the world into “us and them,” where “we” are superior and “they” are inferior (Boyacigiller et al., 2004). People at this stage consider cultural difference as a threat to their self-esteem and identity, as a result, they frequently generate negative stereotypes so as to promote an inner feeling of superiority and the “rightness” of their own value system (Schmidt, 2008). In other terms, they think that their own culture is experienced as the only good and superior one and all others are inferior.

Over the course of time, individuals move to the third stage, the minimization of cultural difference, which means a state in which elements of a person's own cultural worldview are viewed as universal. Individuals at Minimization expect similarities, and they may become persistent about correcting others' behavior to suite their expectations (Boyacigiller et al., 2004). "When you are in the minimization state, you're excessively respectful of other cultures and see yourself as well-meaning and kind. You seek to avoid stereotypes by viewing and judging others as individuals" (Schmidt, 2009).

The second three phases of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity stages are "ethnorelative", which means that an individual own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures (Boyacigiller et al., 2004).

The first stage of the three ethnorelative phases is the acceptance of cultural difference which is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. It does not mean agreement—cultural difference may be judged as immoral and disgusting—but the judgment is not ethnocentric. Individuals who are in this stage are inquisitive about and respectful toward cultural difference (Boyacigiller et al., 2004).

The following ethnorelative stage, adaptation to cultural difference, is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture. Individual's mindset is extended to comprise constructs from other worldviews. In this stage, people are able to look at the world "through different eyes" or to step into another person's shoes and may deliberately alter their behavior to communicate more effectively and appropriately in another culture (Boyacigiller et al., 2004)..

The last ethno relative stage is the integration of cultural difference which means the state in which an individual's experience of self is extended to comprise the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. People at this stage often cope with issues linked to their own "cultural marginality." "This can cause you to lose your primary cultural identity and create what might be described as internal cultural shock — existing on the periphery of two or more cultures, what Milton Bennett calls a sort of cultural marginality. This is common among long-term expatriates, "global nomads" and "third culture kids". (Schmidt, 2009).

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Questions**

This study attempted to measure EFL learners cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity. Accordingly, the following questions were posed:

Q1: What is the cultural knowledge level of second year EFL students?

Q2: What is the intercultural sensitivity level of EFL second year learners?

#### **Participants**

Sixty-eight second year EFL learners studying English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel took part in this study. These participants were selected randomly.

#### **3.4. Instrument**

The main purposes of this study were to test learners' cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity. In order to achieve these objective, Kenji Kitao's test of



American cultural knowledge and Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale have been used.

#### 3.4.1. Kenji Kitao's Test of American cultural knowledge

In order to test the learners' cultural knowledge, The Test of American Culture designed by Kenji Kitao has been adopted. All the questions were multiple choice with four options from which the learners select the best answer. Therefore, this test provides an objective way to check learners' knowledge of specific items and can measure the degree of understanding of each item.

The original test covers 49 different areas of American culture. They include both Culture with a big C, such as literature, music, history, and industry; and culture with a small c, such as nicknames, food, and meals. The test covers some practical items that are necessary and useful for foreign visitors such as the telephone, postage, measurements, money, etc. as well as a number of aspects of covert culture (time, space, etc.) For each item, two questions were composed. For the purpose of this study, only 20 questions have been included in the test.

#### Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

The second testing instrument used in this study was Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS). Chen and Starosta (2000) developed an instrument to explore and measure "intercultural sensitivity". Chen and Starosta's intercultural sensitivity scale instrument was tested with a sample of German students using confirmatory factor analysis by Fritz et. al., (2001). The results of their study confirmed the validity of the general structure of Chen and Starosta's instrument.

This research tool is basically a questionnaire that contains 24 item designed mainly to measure intercultural sensitivity. This scale was selected because its validity across cultures has been recognized by many different studies aimed to assess intercultural sensitivity (McMurray, 2007). The ISS has five constructs as follows:

1. Interaction Engagement (7 items );
2. Respect for Cultural Differences (6 items);
3. Interaction Confidence (5 items);
4. Interaction Enjoyment (3 items);
5. Interaction Attentiveness (3 items).

The first construct , "**Interaction Engagement**" (items 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23,24), deals with participants' feeling of participation in intercultural interaction while the second one, i.e., "**Respect for cultural differences**" (items 2, 7,8, 16, 18, 20), is concerned with the participants' orientation towards or tolerance to their counterparts' culture and opinions. The third construct which is "**Interaction confidence**" (items 3, 4,5, 6, 10) assesses how confident participants have felt in their intercultural contexts. The fourth item, "**Interaction enjoyment**" (items 9, 12, 15), is related to the participants' reaction, positive or negative, towards intercultural communication. Lastly, "**interaction attentiveness**" (items 14, 17, 19), is concerned with the participants' effort to understand the ongoing process of intercultural communication (Chen 1997; Chen & Starostra 2000).

## 4. Results And Discussion

### 4.1. learners' Cultural Knowledge

In order to explore and measure the learners' cultural knowledge level, the Cultural Knowledge Test have been done to the learners. The results are shown in the following table.

*Table: Cultural Knowledge Test Results*

N	Min	Max	Sum, $\Sigma x$	Mean, $\bar{x}$	Variance, $s^2$	Std.Deviation
<b>68</b>	7	18	824	12.11	6.34	2.52

As the table above shows, the learners gained a total of 824 scores in the Cultural Knowledge Test. The mean of the scores obtained is 12.11 out of 20. This means that the learners of this group have an average level in terms of the American cultural knowledge.

### 4.2. Learners' Intercultural Sensitivity

These are the scores obtained by first year EFL learners

#### 4.2.1. Interaction Engagement

Interaction Engagement is related to the feeling of the learners, more specifically, their open-mindedness towards cultural differences during cultural interactions. This factor was measured through 7 items (1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, and 24). The highest score that can be achieved is 35 points for this factor; however, the lowest one is 7 points.

The table below shows the 'Interaction Engagement' means scores obtained by the students.

*Table: Interaction Engagement Mean Scores*

Item N	Item	N	Min	Max	Mean
<b>1</b>	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	68	2	5	4.01
<b>11</b>	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally distinct counterparts.	68	2	5	3.51
<b>13</b>	I am open-minded to people from different cultures.	68	1	5	3.75
<b>21</b>	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	68	2	5	3.42
<b>22</b>	I avoid those situations where will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.	68	1	5	2.75
<b>23</b>	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal and nonverbal cues.	68	1	5	3.5
<b>24</b>	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally- distinct counterpart and me.	68	1	5	3.79
<b>Total Mean</b>					<b>3.53</b>

The table above displays that the learners has a moderate level in terms of "interaction engagement" category. The total mean score for this factor is 3.53 which suggests that the participants have a good level. The first item has the highest mean score (4.01) which shows that the majority of the learners like

interacting with people from other cultures. The twenty-fourth item has the second highest mean score (3.79) which indicates that participants have a feeling of enjoyment towards the differences between them and others who belong to other cultures. The thirteenth item has the third highest score (3.75) which indicates that the participants have a good score regarding being open-minded to people from different cultures. The lowest scored item was the 22<sup>nd</sup> (2.75) which shows that the participants of this study avoid situations where they have to deal people from a different culture.

### **Respect for Cultural Differences**

The table below shows the ‘Respect for Cultural Differences’ pretest score means obtained by the experimental group.

*Table: Respect for Cultural Differences mean scores*

Item N	Item	Min	Max	Mean
2	I think people from other cultures are narrow minded.	1	4	3.41
7	I don't like to be with people from different cultures.	2	4	3.36
8	I respect the values of people from different cultures.	2	5	3.77
16	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	1	4	3.86
18	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.	2	5	2.94
20	I think my culture is better than other cultures.	1	5	2.63
<b>Total Mean</b>				<b>3.33</b>

According to the table above, the participants have a moderate level in terms of IS “Respect for Cultural Differences” category. The total scores mean is 3.48 which implies that the participants have a fair level. The highest scored item (3.86) is ‘item 16’ which indicates that the majority of the learners have a good respect the ways people from different cultures behave. The second highest mean score (3.77) is ‘item 8’ which shows whether the learners of this group respect the values of people from different cultures. The item ‘20’ has the lowest score, which indicates that the participants think that their own culture is better than the other cultures, thus they got a very poor level regarding this item.

### **Interaction Confidence**

The table below shows the ‘Interaction Confidence’ score means obtained by the learners.

*Table: Interaction Confidence Mean Scores*

Item N	Item	Min	Max	Mean
03	I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.	1	5	3.41
04	I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.	1	5	2.76
05	I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	5	3.08
06	I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	5	3.63
10	I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	3	5	3.94
<b>Total</b>				<b>3.36</b>

Concerning the ‘Interaction Confidence’ category, it can be noticed from table above that the learners have an average level. The total score mean is 3.36. The highest scored item (.94) is ‘item 10’ which is feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures, while the fourth item has the lowest score(2.76) which implies that the learners find it difficult to communicate in front of people from other cultures.

### Interaction Enjoyment

The table below shows the ‘Interaction Enjoyment’ mean scores obtained by the learners.

*Table: ‘Interaction Enjoyment’ Mean Scores*

Item N	Item	Min	Max	Mean
9	I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	5	3.33
12	I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.	1	5	3.22
15	I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	5	3.60
Total			3.38	

According to the table presented above, the learners has a moderate level in terms of IS “Interaction Enjoyment” category. The total scores mean is 3.38, which indicates that the participants have a moderate level. The highest scored item (3.60) is ‘item 15’ which is about whether the participants feel useless when interacting with people from other cultures. However, the item ‘12’ has the lowest score (3.22) which is about getting discouraged when they are with people from different cultures.

### Interaction Attentiveness

The table below shows the ‘Interaction Attentiveness’ mean scores obtained by the participants.

*Table: Interaction Attentiveness Mean Scores*

Item N	Item	Min	Max	Mean
14	I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	2	4	3.52
17	I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	5	3.70
19	I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.	2	5	3.36
Total			3.55	

The above table shows that the learners have a moderate level in terms of IS “Interaction Attentiveness” category. The total score mean is 3.55 which implies that the learners have a moderate level in terms of this factor. The highest scored item (3.70) is ‘item 17’. However, the item ‘19’ about whether the learners are sensitive to their culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during their interaction. has the lowest score (3.36).

## 5. Summary of the Results and Conclusion

Kenji Kitao’s test of American cultural knowledge and Chen and Starosta’s Intercultural Sensitivity Scale have been used to measure the students’ level of cultural knowledge and intercultural sensitivity. According to the results, the learners have a fair level in terms of cultural knowledge and intercultural

sensitivity. According to the results, the learners have a positive feeling towards others, this means that they are open-minded towards cultural differences during cultural interactions. Moreover, the scale results revealed that the learners have a mild confidence in intercultural contexts. The results have shown also that the participants' have a mild tolerance to their counterparts' culture and opinions and that they have a positive attitude towards intercultural communication. However, they do not make enough effort to understand the ongoing process of intercultural communication. All in all, although the results indicated that the learners were positive towards the target cultures, many of them were uncertain about their feelings and confidence.

Hence, in the light of the study findings, it is recommended that instructors should try to enrich their students' cultural knowledge and contribute to make their absorption easier. It is also suggested that educators should begin to shed light on assessing culture in order to improve the learners weaknesses and improve the way culture is taught. They should be prepared in the area of teaching and assessing cultural competence. This preparation will help them build the necessary knowledge and skills to better teach culture as a vital and integrated building block of language teaching. FL teachers need to develop their awareness of the value of culture in foreign language teaching and learning sphere so that learners will become more culturally sensitive. They should help their learner become more aware of their own culture as well as the target language culture and teach them not only language structures, but also cultural aspects.

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